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Conference of ministers of
labour, Ottawa, April 22-23, 1971.
Joint communique

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JOINT COMMUNIQUE

CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF LABOUR

OTTAWA, APRIL 22-23, 1971

Canada's Labour Ministers today ended a two-day conference in Ottawa at which discussion focussed on recent and planned changes in labour law, approaches to minimum wage determination and measures to protect the rights of women in the labour force.

The Ministers reviewed the minimum wages established in the different jurisdictions across Canada and examined together a number of the factors that have to be considered when minimum wage levels are being set. They agreed that these factors differ in varying degrees, from one jurisdiction to another. They also agreed that there is need for more intensive study by labour departments of the economic effects of the minimum wage in particular industries and regions and the relationship of the minimum wage to other aspects of social policy.



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The Ministers discussed the need for improvements in laws affecting women in the labour force, including those designed to establish equal opportunity, equal pay for equal work and an entitlement to maternity leave. In the course of this discussion, they reviewed the relevant recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and standards established by conventions of the International Labour Organization. Further federal-provincial consultation on the subject will take place as the current review of the Royal Commission recommendations proceeds.

The review of recent and planned changes in labour law covered a number of fields including industrial relations, labour standards and safety. A frank exchange of views provided an improved understanding of the rationale underlying policy developments in the different jurisdictions.

Because of their broad area of mutual interest and the increasing importance of responsibilities associated with the labour portfolio, the Ministers agreed that they should meet at more regular intervals, and that they should consider holding their next meeting outside Ottawa. They also gave full support to a continuation of regular meetings between their deputy ministers and other senior officials.

The conference was chaired by Federal Labour Minister Bryce Mackasey and attended by Ministers from seven provinces: Stephen A. Neary of Newfoundland, Bruce Stewart of Prince Edward Island, Jean Curnoyer of Québec, G.R. Carton of Ontario, A.R. Paulley of Manitoba, D. MacLennan of Saskatchewan and J.R. Chabot of British Columbia. Labour Ministers Leonard Pace of Nova Scotia, R.E. Logan of New Brunswick and R. Reiersen of Alberta were unable to attend but were represented at the conference.

